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Maitland District Netball Association Inc

Player Wellbeing Procedure

Review Dates	
Adopted	10 th October 2026

Preamble

The Maitland District Netball Association (MDNA) is a not-for-profit organisation and is administered by volunteers. MDNA is incorporated under the 1984 Associations Incorporation Act.

The MDNA is committed to the creation of a positive sporting environment that supports, encourages and provides opportunities for all members to achieve their sporting potential.

We acknowledge the need to embrace change and continuous improvement within our Association.

We are committed to developing a sporting culture that is based on integrity, equity, diversity, trust, and respect for one another.

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Introduction

The Maitland District Netball Association (MDNA) is committed to prioritising athlete wellbeing within all representative program. The Association recognises that athletes may have multiple competing commitments across sport, education, employment, and personal life. This procedure establishes a structured, transparent, and athlete-centred approach to assessing and managing these commitments to support safe participation, effective team planning, and overall player welfare.

1. Purpose

This procedure outlines the process for collecting, assessing, and managing information relating to an athlete's external commitments and overall workload. It ensures that:

- Athlete health, safety, and wellbeing are prioritised.
- Selection and participation decisions are fair, consistent, and informed.
- Risks associated with overcommitment, fatigue, and injury are minimised.
- Clear communication is maintained between athletes, families, and the Association.
- Player inclusion is appropriately supported where education and work commitments may impact participation.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to all athletes selected in, or seeking selection for, MDNA representative teams and squads. For junior athletes, it also applies to parents/carers.

This program may also be used to assess and monitor player inclusion, particularly where athletes are balancing representative netball with:

- School, TAFE, or university commitments; and/or
- Employment obligations.

3. Appointment of Player Wellbeing Co-ordinator

The MDNA Management Committee will appoint a Player Wellbeing Co-ordinator.

The Player Wellbeing Co-ordinator is responsible for:

- Reviewing all External Commitment Declaration Forms on an individual, case-by-case basis.
- Treating each athlete's submission independently, ensuring fair and unbiased consideration.
- Investigating any identified risks or concerns relating to athlete workload, availability, wellbeing, and inclusion.
- Liaising with athletes, parents/carers, coaches, and (where consent is provided) external support personnel.
- Assessing the impact of external commitments, including education and employment, on the athlete's capacity to safely and effectively participate.
- Providing formal recommendations to the relevant MDNA representative coach.
- Reporting back to the MDNA Management Committee on each case, including key considerations and recommended outcomes.

4. Athlete Declaration

All athletes who have external commitments that may impact their availability, wellbeing, or capacity to meet representative program expectations must complete the External Commitment Declaration Form prior to, or at the time of, selection.

Junior athletes must have the declaration completed and endorsed by a parent or carer.

This declaration may be submitted multiple times throughout the representative season. Athletes are required to submit an updated declaration where there is any change to their external commitments, availability, workload, or personal circumstances that may impact their participation, wellbeing, or inclusion within the program.

5. Information Collection

The declaration form captures relevant information including:

- Athlete and parent/carer details (where applicable).
- External sporting, academic, employment, and personal commitments.
- Weekly schedules and known key dates.
- Potential clashes with representative program requirements.
- Athlete workload considerations, including training load, recovery, travel, and wellbeing factors.
- Relevant support personnel and consent to liaise where appropriate.

Athletes are encouraged to provide supporting documentation where available to assist in accurate assessment, particularly in relation to education schedules and work commitments.

6. Assessment and Review Process

Upon submission, the declaration will be reviewed by the Player Wellbeing Co-ordinator, who will:

- Assess the athlete's capacity to meet attendance and participation expectations.
- Evaluate the frequency and impact of scheduling conflicts.
- Consider total physical and mental workload.
- Identify risks relating to fatigue, injury, wellbeing, and overcommitment.
- Consider the impact of education and employment commitments on inclusion and sustainable participation.
- Determine whether external commitments can be modified or managed.

Where necessary, and with consent, the Player Wellbeing Co-ordinator may liaise with external coaches, educators, employers, or medical/support staff to inform their assessment.

A recommendation will then be provided to the athlete's MDNA representative coach.

7. Outcomes

Following review, one of the following outcomes will be recommended:

- Approved – Athlete can participate without restriction.
- Approved with Conditions – Participation is supported subject to specific conditions (e.g. managed training load, agreed absences, modified expectations).
- Further Review Required – Additional information or consultation is needed.
- Not Suitable at This Time – Participation is not supported due to wellbeing, inclusion, or program impact concerns.

Any conditions or management strategies will be clearly documented and communicated.

8. Implementation of Recommendations

The MDNA representative coach is responsible for implementing the recommendations provided by the Player Wellbeing Co-ordinator.

This may include adjusting or managing the athlete's involvement across:

- Fitness sessions;
- Training sessions;
- Practice matches and carnivals; and/or
- State Titles and other competitions.

The representative coach retains discretion in how recommendations are applied within the team environment, provided that athlete wellbeing and inclusive participation remain the priority and the intent of the recommendations is upheld.

9. Athlete Wellbeing and Inclusion Considerations

All decisions will prioritise athlete wellbeing and inclusive participation, including but not limited to:

- Total weekly training and competition load.
- Adequate recovery time and sleep.
- Travel demands and scheduling intensity.
- Injury status or medical considerations.
- Academic pressures and key assessment periods.
- Employment commitments and work scheduling demands.
- Family and personal responsibilities.
- Mental and emotional wellbeing.

Where concerns are identified, MDNA may implement strategies to reduce risk and support inclusion, including workload adjustments, flexible participation arrangements, monitoring, or referral to appropriate support services.

10. Communication Responsibilities

Athletes (and parents/carers where applicable) are responsible for:

- Providing accurate and complete information.
- Communicating any changes to availability or circumstances as early as possible.
- Engaging in open and honest discussions with coaches and program staff.

MDNA is responsible for:

- Communicating outcomes and any conditions clearly and respectfully.
- Maintaining confidentiality of personal information.
- Supporting athletes to balance commitments in a safe, inclusive, and sustainable manner.

11. Ongoing Monitoring and Review

Athlete availability, wellbeing, and inclusion will be monitored throughout the season. Where circumstances change:

- The athlete must notify the Association promptly.
- The Player Wellbeing Co-ordinator may reassess the situation.
- Recommendations and conditions may be updated accordingly.

A formal review date may be set where required.

12. Record Keeping

All declarations, assessments, recommendations, and reports to the MDNA Management Committee will be documented and securely retained by MDNA for the duration of the representative season, in accordance with privacy and data management obligations.